

## Claims

### WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. - 12. (canceled)

13. (new) A connecting element for suspending an article from a structural element and for detachably connecting several articles with one another, the connecting element comprising:

a center part;

a first lateral end area and a second lateral end area;

a first bent area connecting the first lateral end area to the center part and a second bent area connecting the second lateral end area to the center part;

wherein the first and second end areas are positioned within a common first plane and wherein the center part is positioned in a second plane;

wherein the first plane and the second plane are parallel to one another and are spaced at a spacing from one another;

wherein the spacing between the first and second planes is defined by a height of the first and second bent areas, respectively; and

wherein the connecting element has two lateral openings; or a central cutout; or two lateral openings and a central cutout.

14. (new) The connecting element according to claim 13, wherein the first and second bent areas each have one of the two lateral openings.

15. (new) The connecting element according to claim 13, wherein the first and second bent areas are identical.

16. (new) The connecting element according to claim 15 having a mirror-symmetrical configuration relative to a central plane extending through the center part.

17. (new) The connecting element according to claim 13, wherein the central cutout opens in an opening direction that is oriented opposite to opening directions of the two lateral openings.

18. (new) The connecting element according to claim 13, wherein the central cutout and the two lateral openings open in a same opening direction.

19. (new) The connecting element according to claim 13, wherein the central part has slanted contact surfaces in the area of the two lateral openings.

20. (new) The connecting element according to claim 13, wherein the central cutout has slanted contact surfaces.

21. (new) The connecting element according to claim 13, wherein several of said connecting elements are mounted on an article in positions rotated by 90° or 180° relative to one another and are adapted to be connected by a rotational movement to several pins.

22. (new) The connecting element according to claim 13, wherein several of said connecting elements are mounted on a first article in positions rotated by 90° or 180° relative to one another and are adapted to be connected by a rotational movement to several identical ones of said connecting elements mounted on a second article in positions rotated by 90° or 180° relative to one another.

23. (new) The connecting element according to claim 13, wherein the connecting element is comprised of angled sheet metal.

24. (new) The connecting element according to claim 13, wherein the first and second lateral end areas have attachment points.